

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAJ-01 /054 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6301

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 02100

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GW, GE, PL

SUBJECT: NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF FEB. 6 CDU VICTORY
IN HANNOVER

REFS: A. HAMBURG 153 (NOTAL); B. BONN 763 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE SUCCESSFUL ELECTION OF CDU CANDIDATE
ERNST ALBRECHT AS MINISTER PRESIDENT OF LOWER SAXONY ON
FEBRUARY 6 HAS POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS ON THE FRG
NATIONAL SCENE. NOW ALBRECHT, EVEN IF HE IS UNABLE TO
ENTICE THE FDP INTO COALITION, IS IN A POSITION TO FORM
A MINORITY GOVERNMENT WHICH DOES NOT REQUIRE CONFIRMA-
TION BY THE LANDTAG. OF COURSE, SHOULD THE TWO LANDTAG
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DEPUTIES WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE COALITION PARTIES

PUBLICLY SWITCH PARTY LOYALTIES, THE CDU WILL HAVE ENOUGH VOTES FOR A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, UNTIL NOW THEY REMAIN ANONYMOUS. WHILE A SWITCH OF THREE OR FOUR VOTES IN THE LOWER SAXONY LANDTAG DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT A CHANGE IN THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMAN VOTERS, THE CDU VICTORY IN HANNOVER WAS A SHARP BLOW TO THE COALITION PARTIES IN BONN. THE HANNOVER VICTORY COMPLICATES SPD-FDP COALITION RELATIONS, STRENGTHENS FORCES IN THE FDP WHO PREFER A COALITION WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND PUTS THE BUNDESRAT PASSAGE OF THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT IN QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CDU VICTORY IN LOWER SAXONY IS A SETBACK FOR THE SPD/FDP COALITION PARTIES AND A BOOST FOR THE UNION PARTIES ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL. HOW THE CDU SUCCESS IN HANNOVER EVENTUALLY WILL AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF THE OCTOBER 3 FEDERAL ELECTIONS IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GAUGE AT THIS TIME BUT SOME RAMIFICATIONS ARE ALREADY DISCERNIBLE.

2. FOR THE SPD - ALL THE BRAVE WORDS BY BRANDT, RAVENS AND THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE TO THE CONTRARY - THE CDU VICTORY IN HANNOVER IS A SEVERE SETBACK. THE SPD NATIONAL LEADERSHIP UNSUCCESSFULLY INVESTED CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE IN THE HANNOVER ELECTION BY SENDING FEDERAL HOUSING MINISTER RAVENS AS THE COALITION CANDIDATE FOR MINISTER PRESIDENT AFTER KASIMIER HAD FAILED TO BE ELECTED. IN ADDITION, LOWER SAXONY SPD CHAIRMAN AND AUTHOR OF THE SPD LONG TERM PROGRAM (OR 85) VON OERTZEN-STOCK HAS PLUMMETED IN BONN.

3. FOR THE FDP THE HANNOVER RESULT HAS PUSHED THE WHOLE QUESTION OF COALITION TACTICS ONCE AGAIN TO THE FOREFRONT. FDP CHAIRMAN GENSCHER HAD WITH SOME SUCCESS ATTEMPTED TO TURN THE DISCUSSION AWAY FROM TACTICS TO A DISCUSSION ON POLICY ISSUES BUT THIS WAS UNDONE BY THE HANNOVER RESULT. SHOULD THE FDP ONCE AGAIN REFUSE TO JOIN THE CDU IN A GOVERNMENT, THE LIBERALS WILL BE EVEN MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE CHARGE OF BEING A "BLOCK-CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTEI' THE ALBRECHT VICTORY WILL ALSO STRENGTHEN THOSE FORCES WITHIN THE FDP OUTSIDE OF LOWER SAXONY WHO FAVOR A COALITION WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE CHANCELLOR TOLD US VERY RECENTLY THAT THE SPD BELIEVED THE SAARLAND FDP MIGHT FORM A COALITION WITH THE CDU BUT THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HOPED THAT IF A CDU/FDP COALITION IN THE SAARLAND TOOK PLACE AT ALL IT WOULD HAPPEN AFTER OCTOBER 3. THE SPD

FEARED THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN LOWER SAXONY MIGHT
ENCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF AN CDU/FDP COALITION IN
SAARBRUECKEN BEFORE THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS.

4. FOR THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION IN BONN THE
DEVELOPMENTS IN LOWER SAXONY ARE BOUND TO PLACE A

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STRAIN ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES IN THE
CAPITAL AS WELL AS IN HANNOVER (CHARGES AND COUNTER-
CHARGES AS TO WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE CAN BE EXPECTED). IT
IS CLEAR, FDP LEADER GENSCHER BELIEVES THE FDP WILL DO

BETTER AT THE POLLS IF THE FDP IS PLEDGED, AT LEAST ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL, TO FORMING ONCE AGAIN SPD/FDP COALITION. SINCE HANNOVER HE IS LIKELY TO COME UNDER INCREASED PRESSURE FROM COLLEAGUES IN HIS OWN PARTY TO AVOID COMMITTING THE FDP IN ADVANCE. WHILE HE IS LIKELY TO REMAIN FIRM, THE DISCUSSION IN ITSELF WILL CREATE A SENSE OF INSECURITY AMONG THE COALITION PARTNERS.

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5. HOW THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN HANNOVER WILL AFFECT THE VOTE IN THE BUNDESRAT ON THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT REMAINS UNCLEAR. MUCH COULD DEPEND ON WHAT KIND OF A DEAL ALBRECHT MAKES WITH THE FDP (I.E., PASSIVE SUPPORT OR AN ACTUAL COALITION) IN HANNOVER. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT FOLLOWING ALBRECHT'S ELECTION, THE LOWER SAXONY FDP CHAIRMAN GROSS ANNOUNCED THE COALITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LIBERALS AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WAS NO LONGER GOVERNING. WE HAVE HEARD FROM SOURCES CLOSE TO CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE KOHL THAT THE UNION PARTIES ARE CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF ATTEMPTING TO HAVE THE FINAL VOTE IN THE BUNDESRAT POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER THE OCTOBER 3 FEDERAL ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCE SAID, THE FINAL DECISION AS TO WHETHER TO ATTEMPT THIS TACTIC WILL DEPEND ON WHAT DEVELOPS IN HANNOVER.

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